

2015 Survey of America's College Students

Conducted on Behalf of:
The Panetta Institute for Public Policy

By Hart Research Associates

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I. Introduction

This report summarizes the major findings of a survey among American college students conducted by Hart Research Associates for the Panetta Institute for Public Policy. Starting in 2001, the Panetta Institute has commissioned Hart Research to conduct surveys among US college students that yield invaluable insights into their opinions. Because of the research's continuity and depth, it truly is one of the best barometers for measuring college students' attitudes. Hart Research is honored to have conducted this important research on behalf of the Panetta Institute, and we present the results in this summary of key findings.

The 2015 Panetta Institute survey covers a number of issues in depth, including how college students see the direction of the country; their assessment of leading political figures, including ratings of President Obama; what college students are looking for in a presidential candidate in 2016; views on major foreign policy issues; ratings of the country's economic condition as well as how college students feel about their own financial situation and outlook; college students' assessments of energy and environmental considerations; and college students' interest in public service. The following are the major findings from this year's survey:

- College students have become much more positive about the direction of the country; for the first time since 2010, more students say the country is headed in the right direction (57%) than say the country is off on the wrong track (43%).
- Related, students are much more favorable toward the nation's economic outlook, with 52% now describing the economy as excellent or good, up from 28% last year.
- Though the outlook has improved, college students see economic considerations, especially the cost of a college education, as the biggest problems facing the country domestically.
- With the improved national outlook, students have also become more favorable toward Barack Obama and his signature policy, the Affordable Care Act. His job rating has increased from a low of 56% to 65%, and support for the Affordable Care Act has increased from 53% to 65%.
- The improved mood also can be seen on increased overall satisfaction with our country's political leadership, which has increased from 39% last year to 46% now. And the proportion of students who say that politics are relevant in their life has jumped from 42% last year to 59% today.

- College students still believe that most of the problems facing their generation will be national rather than international, but this gap has narrowed from 69% to 30% last year to 57% to 43%.
- And on a related note, students generally want the United States to increase or maintain its current level of involvement in international affairs.
- Part of this shift in attitudes can probably be attributed to the rise of ISIS. Students have become more worried about a terrorist attack, with 51% now saying they are worried about a terrorist attack, up from 39% last year.
- Turning to the 2016 presidential race, college students are following the race as closely as they were the historic race of 2008, eight years ago.
- By 59% to 38% college students prefer a candidate who will bring greater change over someone with more experience, which is a challenge for both Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton. But at least among this population, this seems to be more of a challenge for Bush than Clinton.
- In trial heats against three potential Republicans—Bush, Paul, and Walker—Hillary Clinton receives more than 50% of the vote.
- Turning to campus issues, 83% of college students say that sexual assault is a problem on campuses across the country, and 46% acknowledge that this is a problem on THEIR campus.
- While 75% say that race relations are good on college campuses, 55% say that race relations are bad across the country, with real doubts that African Americans and other minorities receive equal treatment in the criminal justice system and equal access to economic opportunity or a high-quality education compared to whites.
- Four in five (80%) college students see global warming as a serious problem, and three in five (60%) think protecting the environment should be a higher priority than developing more energy.
- Students report increased interest in working for the government, and at 47%, this matches the all-time high for interest. In fact, in nearly all instances, we find increased interest in public service. More than three in five (63%) college students are interested in receiving a grant or financial assistance for college tuition in exchange for two years of national service after graduation.

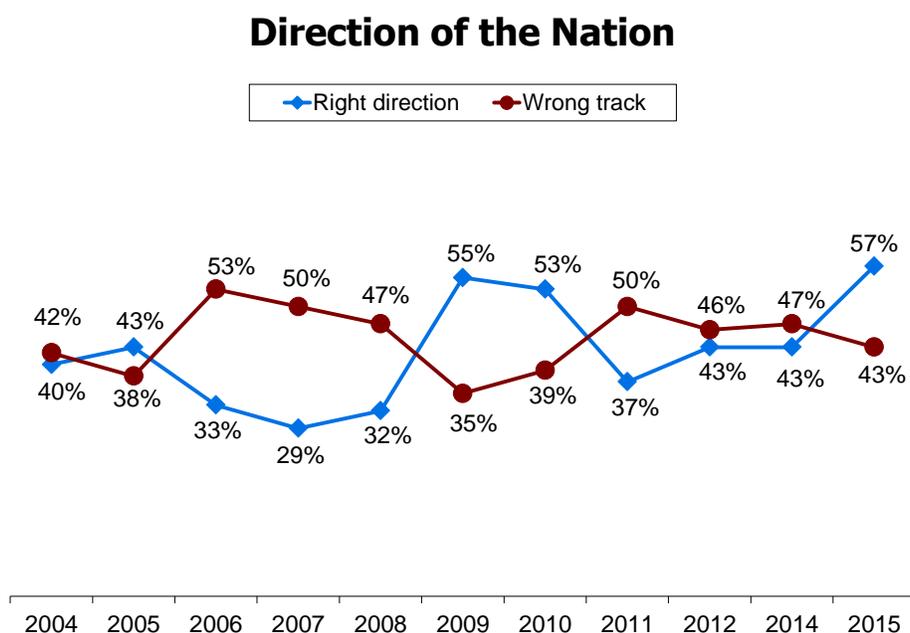
Methodology

Hart Research contracted with an online survey vendor to administer the survey to a sample of people currently enrolled in some type of post-secondary institution drawn from the vendor's multi-million-member respondent panel. Screening questions limited participation to students enrolled in a four-year higher learning institution. A total of 803 interviews were completed online. All interviews were conducted from April 16 to 23, 2015. Some demographics were weighted to achieve representative samples of four-year college students nationwide.

II. State of the Nation

Over the past year, college students have become much more optimistic about the direction of the country, and for the first time since 2010, more students say the country is headed in the right direction than say it is off on the wrong track. A major factor in this shift may be the much more favorable view that college students have about the nation's economy. However, while college students believe that the nation's economy has improved markedly in just one year, they also identify economic concerns as some of the most serious problems facing the country, most notably the cost of a college education.

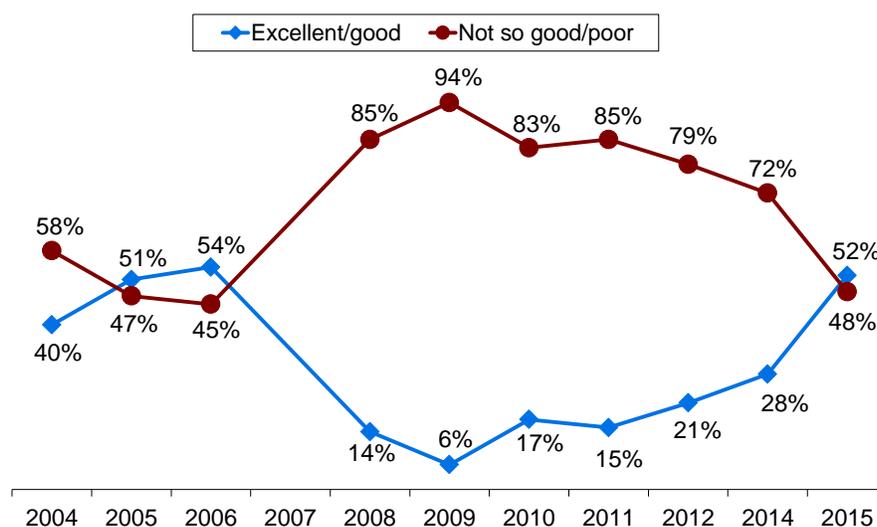
Today, by 57% to 43%, college students are more likely to say that the country is headed in the right direction rather than that things are off on the wrong track. This 14-point net positive margin is a major shift from last year's survey, when college students were net negative on the direction of the country by four points (43% to 47%).



A significant driver in the dramatic improvement in college students' view of the country's direction can be seen in their feelings about the nation's economy. Consider that among those who say the economy is excellent or good, 74% believe that the country is headed in the right direction, but among those who believe that the economy is not so good or poor, only 39% say things are headed in the right direction.

What has really changed in the past year is that many more college students believe that the economy is getting better. In 2014, just 28% felt that the nation's economy was excellent or good, and now 52% say that this is the case. Improvements are seen across the board, but those from an upper- or upper-middle-class family (56% excellent or good) are still more likely to say that the economy is doing well than those from a lower- or lower-middle-class family (41%). Compared with last year, African Americans are more likely to say that the economy has gotten better than other college students, with 73% saying the nation's economy today is excellent or good compared with just 25% who said that was the case last year.

State of the Economy



Despite the dramatic improvement in how college students view the nation's economy, they highlight financial concerns as being the most important problems facing the country among the domestic issues we tested. A majority of college students (56%) say that the cost of a college education is a very serious problem, which is by far the biggest problem college students mention. While there is little difference between those who attend a public school (56%) and a private school (53%), freshman (47%) are less likely than upperclassmen (58%) to see the cost of college as a very serious problem. Second on the list of concerns is the cost of healthcare, with 39% of college students indicating that this is a very serious problem.

There are also significant differences by partisanship, with Democrats expressing much greater concern about gridlock between the political parties and equal access to economic opportunity, while Republicans are somewhat more likely to mention the country's immigration policy as a very serious problem.

**Proportions Who Say This is a Very Serious Problem
by Partisan Identification**

	All College Students	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
	%	%	%	%
The cost of a college education	56	63	56	41
The cost of healthcare	39	46	33	30
Gridlock between the political parties	31	40	26	20
Equal access to economic opportunity	29	41	22	14
Balancing the nation's security needs with protecting individuals' privacy	28	30	27	25
The country's immigration policy	24	23	19	31

The survey tested three economic/financial items, those mentioned previously, as well as equal access to economic opportunity, and on all three of these measures, college students from a lower- and lower-middle-class family are more likely to say that these are very serious problems than students from an upper-middle-class or upper-class family.

**Proportions Who Say This is a Very Serious Problem
by Economic Class of Family**

	Lower/Lower Middle Class	Upper/Upper Middle Class
	%	%
The cost of a college education	63	48
The cost of healthcare	44	38
Equal access to economic opportunity	35	23

In addition to concern about equal access to economic opportunity, support for raising the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour has increased. Last year, 62% favored this increase, but this has bumped up to 72% now. Fully 85% of Democrats and 69% of independents favor raising the minimum wage, while Republicans are divided, with 50% favoring this and 50% opposing raising the minimum wage. Still, this marks significant movement among Republicans who opposed raising the minimum wage last year by 59% to 38%.

Barack Obama and Political Attitudes

Barack Obama's job rating has returned to above 60% among college students and he continues to be viewed largely favorably by them. College students are also more likely to view the country's political leadership satisfactorily, and this is in line with a significant uptick in the proportion of college students who say politics are relevant in their life.

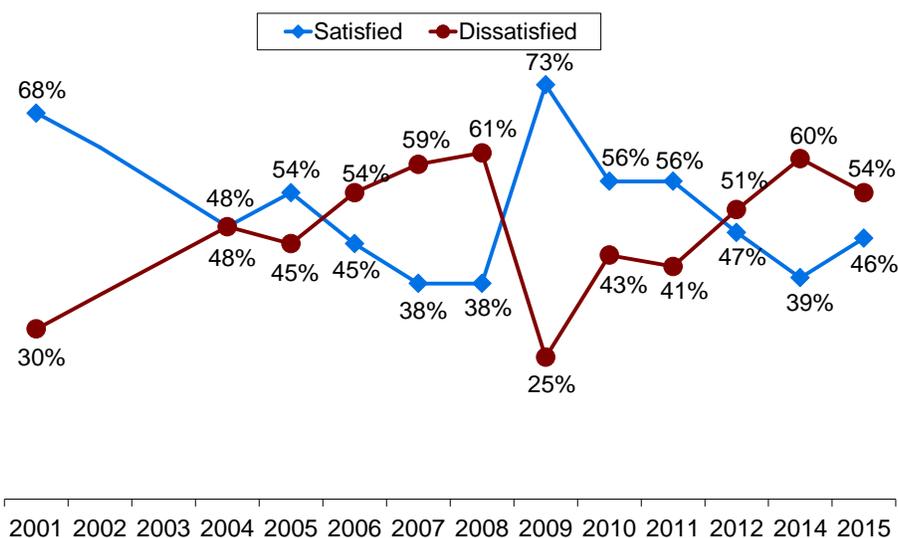
The president's job rating has bounced back from a record-low last year (56%) to 65% today. The improved marks are seen across partisan lines, among Democrats (+6 points), independents (+9 points), and Republicans (+8 points).

While the president's job rating has improved appreciably since last year's survey, personal feelings toward him also have improved, but by a smaller amount. Last year, 50% of college students had positive feelings toward Barack Obama, and 29% viewed him negatively. Now, 55% hold positive feelings for him, with 29% still taking a negative assessment.

College students cite partisan gridlock as one of the problems facing the country, but they do not seem to assign much blame to President Obama. By 64% to 36%, college students are more likely to say that the president is trying to work with Congress rather than that he is doing too much on his own and not working with Congress. Strong majorities of both Democrats (83%) and independents (65%) say that Obama is trying to work with Congress, while 72% of Republicans take the opposite view and say that Obama is doing too much on his own and not working with Congress.

Not only do college students have a more favorable impression of Barack Obama than they did a year ago, but their feelings about the quality of the country's political leadership also have improved. It is worth noting that the April 2014 survey was conducted not too long after the October 2013 government shutdown and the troubled rollout of the Affordable Care Act website, which was a time when many Americans had a low opinion of government and the country's leaders. In 2014, just 39% of students were satisfied with the country's political leadership and this has improved to 46%. Notably, independents are more likely to have increased their satisfaction with the country's political leadership than partisans; independents' satisfaction increased 12 points, from 33% to 45%, in just one year.

Satisfaction with the Country's Political Leadership



An even greater movement from the days post-government shutdown in early 2014 is seen in the increase in the proportion of college students who say that politics are relevant in their life. Just 42%, an all-time low, felt that this was the case in 2014; this has increased to 59% today. Democrats show the biggest increase in relevance among partisan groups, up from 39% to 67% in just one year. Perhaps an encouraging sign for the future, freshman (64%) are most likely to say that politics are relevant in their life. College students who report that they are registered to vote are more likely than those who are not to say that politics are relevant to them (62% to 46%). And fully 94% of college students who say they are following the 2016 presidential election very closely say politics are relevant in their life.

The 2016 Election

College students are as likely to be following the 2016 race for president at this time as they were eight years ago in advance of the historic 2008 election. Students are looking for a candidate who will bring greater change rather than someone with experience, which is a potential problem for frontrunners on both sides. Still, among college students, this is much more of an issue for Jeb Bush than Hillary Clinton, and though many college students want to see her challenged

in a Democratic primary, Clinton fares very well against potential Republican challengers.

Another sign of greater political engagement on US campuses is that college students are as likely as they were in 2007, leading up to the historic 2008 presidential election, to say that they are following the presidential race closely. More than three in five (62%) college students say they are following the race very or somewhat closely, actually a tick higher than 2007 (61%). Again, freshmen (70%) are most likely to be following the race closely. And Democrats (69%) are more likely to be following the race closely than are independents (48%) or Republicans (61%).

When it comes to the 2016 presidential election, college students are looking for a person who will bring greater changes to current policies rather than someone who is more experienced, even if they bring fewer changes, by 61% to 39%. College students across party lines are clear in their preference for someone who will bring greater changes, including 59% of Democrats, 63% of independents, and 64% of Republicans.

Preference for 2016

This is a time when it is important to look for:

A person who will bring greater changes to the current policies even if he or she is less experienced and tested



A more experienced and tested person even if he or she brings fewer changes to the current policies



In facing this desire for change, the two leading candidates on each side, Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton, face a potential challenge due to their long records of public service. However, among college students, the results reveal that the challenge for Jeb Bush is far greater than it is for Hillary Clinton. Fully 69% of college students say that Jeb Bush would represent too much of a return to the policies of the past, and this includes 48% of Republicans. While still a high

proportion, a lower 43% feel the same can be said for Hillary Clinton, but 57% take the other point of view that she would provide new ideas and the vision the country needs for the future.

While college students are less likely to see Hillary Clinton as representing the past, this is not to say that they have stamped her ticket to the general election. A majority of college students (57%) want Democrats to find a candidate to challenge Hillary Clinton for the nomination, including 50% of Democrats. Still, while her personal ratings have diminished somewhat since last year, before she re-entered the political arena, Hillary Clinton’s personal ratings of 45% positive, 32% negative are solid, particularly compared with potential Republican challengers tested in this survey. Moreover, her rating among Democrats at 68% positive, 12% negative bodes well in the Democratic primaries. For the sake of comparison, though she has vowed repeatedly not to run for president, Elizabeth Warren has a 29% positive, 9% negative rating among Democrats.

On the Republican side, the candidates are much less well known, and none of the five candidates we tested has a net positive rating among college students. However, looking at the results among just Republican college students shows that Marco Rubio and Rand Paul are in better shape than the other contenders.

Personal Ratings of Republican Presidential Candidates AMONG ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS		
	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>
	%	%
Rand Paul	20	26
Marco Rubio	17	20
Jeb Bush	16	31
Ted Cruz	16	27
Scott Walker	12	14

Personal Ratings of Republican Presidential Candidates AMONG REPUBLICANS		
	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>
	%	%
Rand Paul	36	11
Marco Rubio	31	9
Jeb Bush	28	14
Ted Cruz	28	16
Scott Walker	18	7

Turning to the general election trial heats matching up Hillary Clinton against Rand Paul, Jeb Bush, and Scott Walker, there is little differentiation between the three races. Hillary Clinton receives majority support against all three candidates and her share of Democratic support is stronger than Republican support is for any of the three potential opponents. Clinton does much better with women, African Americans, Hispanics, those in the social sciences, and those in the Northeast.

Presidential Trial Heats By Subgroup						
	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Paul</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Walker</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
All students	55	31	57	29	55	29
Men	51	34	54	32	50	32
Women	59	27	60	27	59	26
Northeast	63	23	63	24	62	24
South	55	33	53	34	54	32
Midwest	49	34	56	29	53	31
West	55	31	59	27	54	28
Whites	49	39	52	37	50	36
Hispanics	63	24	64	23	62	22
African Americans	78	2	75	9	72	6
Asians	57	21	60	15	55	19
Social sciences	63	27	63	30	69	24
Humanities	59	32	66	29	62	24
Science/math/CS	57	29	57	27	55	27
Business	50	35	55	30	49	35
Democrats	83	10	85	9	82	9
Independents	42	24	46	23	41	23
Republicans	18	75	17	73	19	71

Race Relations

College students are more likely to believe that race relations across the country are bad rather than good, but they take the opposite point of view in thinking about race relations on campus. There are significant differences in opinion between whites and African Americans on whether African Americans receive treatment equal to whites, but even among whites, who are more likely to believe this to be the case, the proportions are quite low. It should be noted that this survey was completed prior to the protests in Baltimore.

By 55% to 45%, college students are more likely to say that race relations in the United States are bad rather than good. Majorities of African Americans (62%),

Asians (57%), and whites (53%) all say that race relations are bad, with Hispanics being divided evenly—50% say good, 50% say bad.

However, when it comes to race relations on college campuses, three in four college students (75%) say that race relations are good, and strong majorities across racial groups take this view, including 78% of whites, 74% of Hispanics, 68% of African Americans, and 67% of Asians.

In evaluating how African Americans and other minorities are treated compared with whites, there are significant differences between whites and African Americans on all three areas of focus, including receiving equal treatment in the criminal justice system (21-point gap), having equal access to economic opportunity (25-point gap), and having equal access to high-quality education (20-point gap).

Proportions Who Say Blacks and Other Minorities are Treated Equally as Whites in...

	<u>Whites</u> %	<u>African Americans</u> %	<u>Hispanics</u> %	<u>Asians</u> %
Receiving equal treatment in the criminal justice system	38	17	30	26
Having equal access to economic opportunity	49	24	35	35
Having equal access to high-quality education	57	37	40	43

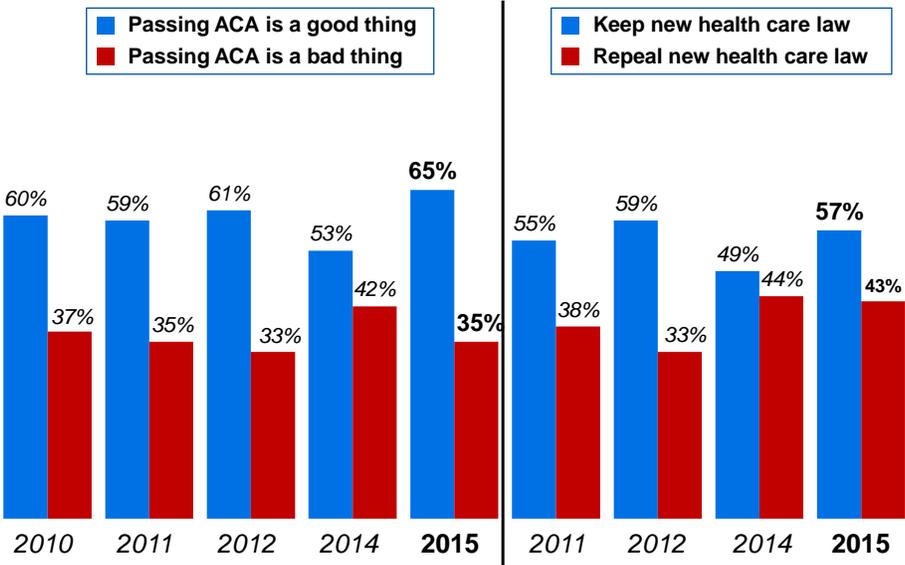
Healthcare

Support for the Affordable Care Act has bounced back from a low point in 2014 with strong majorities saying it was a good thing that Congress passed the bill and wanting to see the law kept in place.

Nearly two in three (65%) college students now say that it was a good thing that Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. This marks a 12-point increase from last year's survey, which was conducted only months after major problems with the Affordable Care Act website and other challenges with the law's implementation. On this measure, the increase comes mostly from independents (+15) and Republicans (+15), while among Democrats it has ticked up five points. Still, 85% of Democrats say it is a good thing, compared with 62% of independents, and 29% of Republicans.

And as we get further away from the website problems, we also see increased support for keeping rather than repealing the law. In 2014, there was just a five-point margin between keeping the new healthcare law and repealing it (49% to 44%). Now, the margin has expanded to 14 points, 57% to 43%. Democrats and Republicans are mirror images of each other, with 77% of Democrats wanting to keep the law and 23% siding for repeal, while Republicans take the exact opposite position. Independents want to keep the law by 53% to 47%. Those from lower- or lower-middle-class families are most likely to want to keep the new law, by 67% to 33%.

Attitudes on the Affordable Care Act



Energy and the Environment

College students have progressive environmental views. Five years ago, 71% of college students viewed the threat of global warming as a serious problem. Today, 80% of students say global warming is either a very (41%) or somewhat (39%) serious problem. Conservatives are the least likely to say so, with only 56% agreeing that global warming is a serious problem, compared with 90% of liberals.

A strong majority are prioritizing the environment over national energy needs. Three in five (60%) agree that our first priority should be protecting the environment, even if it means that the United States will not produce as much energy and will be less likely to achieve energy independence. More than three-

quarters (76%) of students agree that we should reduce our demand for energy by passing regulations that encourage energy efficiency instead of focusing more on increasing production from energy sources to meet our energy demands.

Additionally, students favor expanding energy production only if it is alternative energy. Fully 90% favor using subsidies provided by the federal government to expand production for alternative energy industries like wind power and solar power.

Students would prefer to see energy production decrease in all areas except solar and wind power. Coal is most unpopular, with 64% saying they want to see energy production decrease in this area, followed by oil (60%), fracking for gas (53%), and nuclear power (45%). Just 6% of students want to see energy production from solar and wind power decrease, while 86% would like to see an increase of energy production in this area.

Immigration

Though concern among students about immigration has increased since 2014, it is a lower-tier concern. When asked to rate a series of problems facing the country today, students rate immigration as the least serious; just 24% give it a rating of 9 or 10 (up from 17% last year).

Despite the slight increase in the perception of immigration as a very serious problem, students are very supportive of providing a path to citizenship. Four in five (80%) favor providing a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants who were brought to the United States as children if they meet certain requirements, compared with 76% of the adult population overall. Favorability increases among lower-class students (85%), Democrats (90%), Hispanics (91%), and those in the Northeast (86%), though Republicans (70%) and conservatives (68%) also largely favor a pathway as well.

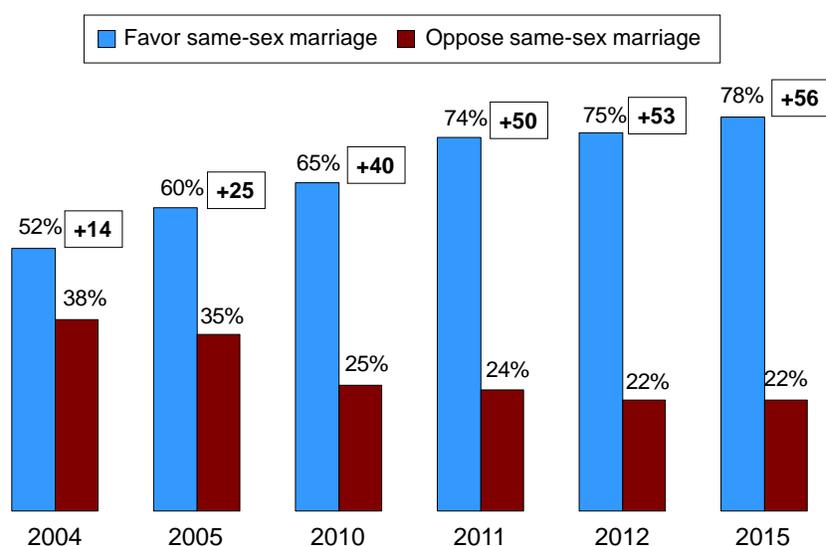
Social Issues

Support for abortion rights increased by nine points between 2005 and 2012, with 58% and 67% of students agreeing that it should be legal, respectively. In 2015 however, support for abortion dropped six points to 61% of students saying it should be legal in most (30%) or all (31%) cases. Support among women is not

significantly higher; 63% believe it should be legal in most or all cases. The highest support for abortion rights comes from students in the social sciences (71%), the Northeast (72%), Democrats (78%), and liberals (80%).

Support for same-sex marriage, on the other hand, has seen a steady increase every year we have asked the question. When asked in 2004 if they favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to enter into same-sex marriages, just over half (52%) of students favored it. Now, 78% of students strongly favor (64%) or somewhat favor (14%) allowing same-sex marriage, a 26-point increase.

Views Of Same-Sex Marriage



A comparable number of students (74%) feel that businesses should not be allowed to use religious objections to refuse to sell goods and services to same-sex couples who are getting married. But whatever their opinion on the matter, students tend to feel strongly about their position, with 61% feeling strongly that businesses should NOT be able to do so and 18% (out of 26% total) feeling strongly that businesses SHOULD be allowed to do so.

Education and Campus Life

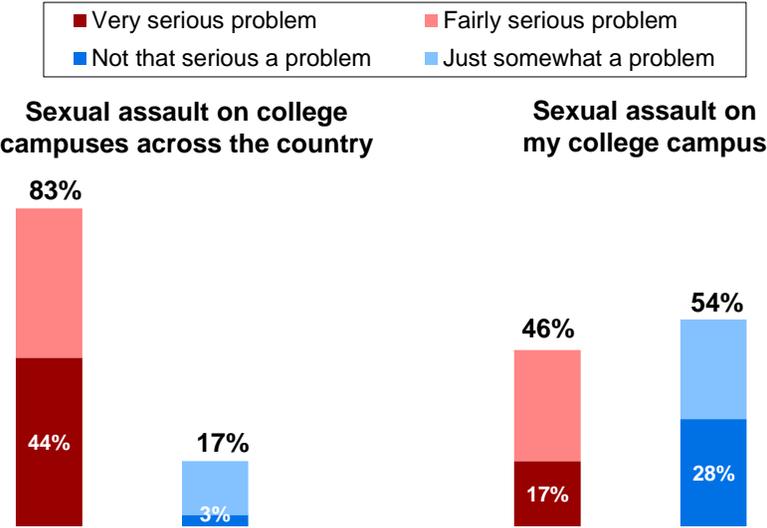
College students today worry more about the cost of a college education than they do about any other problem on the list of concerns we tested. When asked to rate a set of problems facing the nation on a scale of one to 10, 56% of students give it a rating of very serious (9 or 10). Even the cost of healthcare trailed behind the

price of an education by 17 points. Among those who are most likely to rate the cost of a college education as very serious are Hispanics (66%), those very interested in working for government (65%), juniors (65%), Democrats (63%), and lower/lower-middle class students (63%).

The cost of a college education is a...			
	Serious problem (rating of 9-10)	Not a serious problem (rating of 0-6)	Mean rating
	%	%	#
All college students	56	22	8.1
Whites	52	22	8.0
African Americans	60	24	8.2
Hispanics	66	15	8.6
Asians	50	32	7.9
Very interested in government	65	12	8.6
Democrats	63	15	8.5
Independents	56	24	8.1
Republicans	41	33	7.3
Upper/upper-middle class	48	28	7.7
Middle class	56	22	8.2
Lower/lower-middle class	63	14	8.6
Freshmen	47	28	7.7
Sophomores	57	25	8.1
Juniors	65	17	8.5
Seniors	52	18	8.2
Public school	56	20	8.2
Private school	53	28	8.0

Looking more closely at campus life, the survey finds major concerns about sexual assault. Fully 83% of students say that sexual assault is a very or fairly serious problem on college campuses across the country. Women are more likely than men to see sexual assault as a problem on campuses (88% to 77%). And 46% of college students acknowledge that sexual assault is a problem on THEIR campus. Here, there is less gender variation, as 48% of women and 43% of men believe that sexual assault is a problem on their campus. Students at public schools are more likely to see sexual assault as a problem on their campus than those who attend a private school (48% to 40%).

Perceived Seriousness of the Problem of Sexual Assault



Personal Future

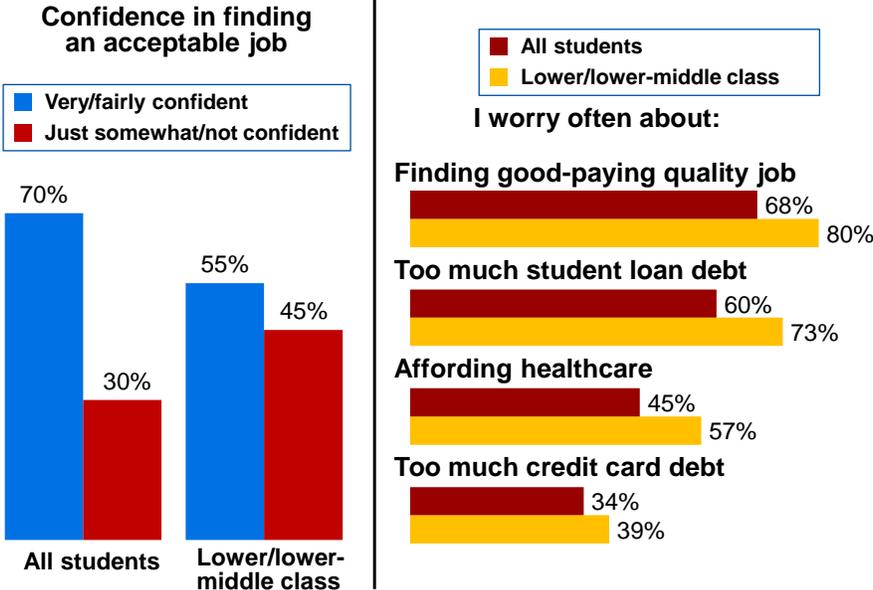
College students remain just as optimistic as last year that they will find an acceptable job after graduation. Seven in 10 are either very (31%) or fairly (39%) confident that they will do so, though the proportion that are very confident about finding a good job is down slightly from 2014 (31% compared with 34%).

Despite remaining hopeful about their job prospects, students' worries have increased slightly in every category since last year, especially in terms of healthcare. Nearly half (45%) of students worry very (19%) or somewhat (26%) often about not being able to afford healthcare, up 10% from 2014. However, students' greatest worries are still finding a good-paying job (68%, up from 63% in 2014) and having too much student loan debt (60%, up from 58% in 2014).

And although many are confident they can find a job after graduation, students are making the distinction between finding an "acceptable" job and a "good-paying quality" job. While 70% are confident they will find an acceptable position, a similar proportion (68%) say they worry about finding one that pays well. This concern is especially pronounced among lower- to lower-middle-class students and those in the social sciences, 80% and 82% respectively. To make matters worse, lower- and lower-middle-class students are far less confident about even finding an acceptable job, with only 55% expressing confidence they will be

able to do so, making them the least confident group among all college students. In fact, lower/lower-middle-class students are less confident and more worried in all categories than any other group.

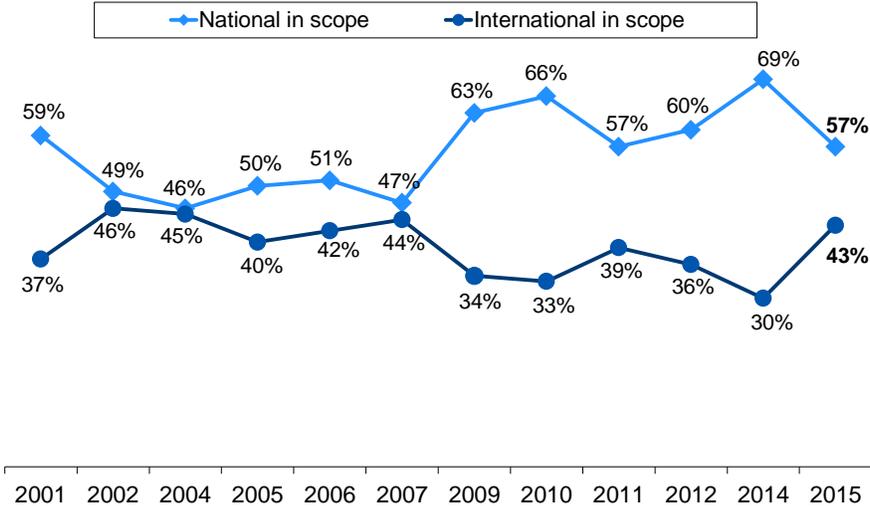
Apprehension about the Future



III. International Issues

In recent years, college students have overwhelmingly focused on difficulties at home. Last year, 69% said most of the problems their generation will face will be national in scope, while just 30% said those problems will be international. That presented the widest gap (39 points) in the history of the Panetta Institute poll. Today, students remain more likely to say their problems will be national rather than international (57% to 43%), but that gap has narrowed to 14 points, the smallest it has been since 2007.

Most of the problems my generation will face are:



Students of all partisan persuasions have shifted focus, and independents have become more closely aligned with the Democrats on this issue. While independents and Republicans were both as likely last year to say their problems will be national (70% national, 29% international), today Democrats and independents are more likely to agree (56% national, 44% international for both groups).

When asked whether the United States should become more involved, less involved, or maintain its current level of involvement in specific international situations, students lean toward more over less involvement. On each foreign policy measure, students very clearly do not want the United States to become less involved. However, opinions are divided on whether the United States should become more involved or maintain its current level of involvement.

Given the growing importance of environmental concerns (80% of students see global warming as a serious problem), it is no surprise that working with China on reducing pollution and strengthening environmental standards tops the list of foreign issues on which students want to see greater US involvement. Half (50%) of students desire more involvement on this issue and 38% want to see the United States stay as involved as it is now. Working with China is followed by fighting ISIS in Syria and Iraq, on which 41% of students wish to see more American involvement and 38% wish to maintain US involvement. The only issue for which

students would rather see equal or *less* involvement is on challenging Russia and its actions in the Ukraine, which tracks with where students were last year. In 2014, 68% of students thought it was more important for the United States to not get too involved in the situation. This year, 44% of students want the United States to stay as involved as it is currently and 35% would like to see less involvement. Only 21% would rather the United States become more involved in the situation.

United States Involvement Abroad			
	Become More Involved	Stay as Involved	Become Less Involved
	%	%	%
Working with China on reducing pollution and strengthening environmental standards	50	38	12
Preventing Americans and other westerners from traveling to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS and the Islamic State	41	43	16
Fighting ISIS or the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq	41	38	21
Preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons	37	48	15
Working with Israel and the Palestinians to form a lasting peace in the area	36	41	23
Challenging Russia and its actions in the Ukraine	21	44	35

Regarding Iran, most (78%) view the preliminary agreement to limit that country's nuclear program as a good deal, but 77% still want Congress to have a say and vote on the final agreement. Among the 77% of students who want a Congressional vote, 78% want Congress to vote to approve the agreement. Support for the Iran deal goes up dramatically among African American students, 89% of whom see it as a good deal. Hispanic students also are more likely to view the deal as a good one (85%). Asian students tend to view the deal in a slightly more negative light, with three in ten (31%) calling it a bad deal.

Though students' interest in international affairs and approval of US involvement is growing, they are more divided in their view of President Obama's approach than they are on his overall job rating—57% approve of the job the president is doing in handling foreign policy, compared with 65% overall. Half (50%) of students feel that President Obama takes about the right approach in using military force, and 42% feel that he takes the right approach on foreign policy in general. Opinions on these issues break along partisan lines. Democrats are more likely to say Obama is taking the right approach to foreign policy and to using

military force (57% and 64%), while Republicans are more likely to say he is too passive in his approach and too reluctant to use military force (66% and 54%).

IV. Personal Privacy, Intelligence, and Terrorism

Though their economic outlook has improved and there are signs students are turning their attention to the global arena, not all of it is positive. In 2014, 39% of students worried about the United States experiencing another terrorist attack. About half (51%) of students today say they are very (17%) or fairly (34%) worried about such an event. The 12-point increase may be due to recent developments with ISIS.

And despite the fact that an attack of this kind has not yet occurred, an even greater proportion (56%) of students worry about the United States experiencing a major cyber terrorist attack that would paralyze the nation or cause serious disruption to credit, financial, or Internet operations. When asked the same question in 2014, 47% worried about a cyber attack.

How much a student worries about an attack (whether it is cyber-related or not), correlates with a number of factors. Those who say the problems their generation will face are international rather than national in scope are more likely to worry about attacks. Those who get most of their information about politics and civil affairs from newspapers are much more likely than the average college student to say they are worried about a terrorist (65%) or cyber (70%) attack, followed by students who get their news from television (56% and 59%). Of the students following the 2016 election very closely, 64% worry about another terrorist attack on the United States and 69% worry about a cyber attack.

Worried about the United States experiencing a...		
	Terrorist Attack	Cyber Attack
	%	%
All college students	51	56
Democrats	46	56
Independents	55	54
Republicans	59	61
Following 2016 very closely	64	69
Following somewhat closely	51	56
Not following closely/at all	47	52
Very interested in government	60	61
Problems are: international	57	61
Problems are: national	48	53
Internet news/blogs	46	52
Internet social media	49	55
Television	56	59
Family/friends	49	55
Newspaper	65	70
Whites	50	56
Hispanics	53	53
African Americans	59	62
Asians	53	57

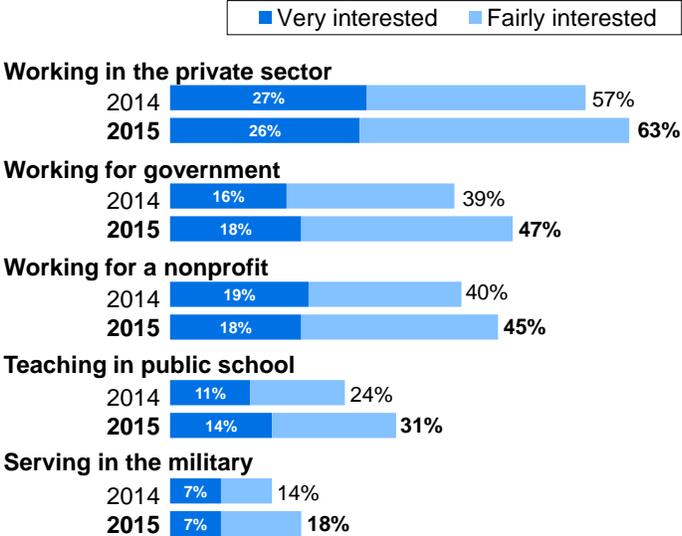
However, heightened fears over national security have not diminished worries about personal privacy. College students are just as concerned as last year about balancing the nation's security needs with protecting individuals' privacy. About three in five (59%, compared with last year's 60%) rate this as a serious problem facing the country today. Many of the same groups that worry more about terrorist attacks also show more concern than their peers for the need to balance safety with privacy. Though African American students worry a great deal about terrorist and cyber attacks (59% and 62% respectively), an even greater number (68%) rate balancing safety with privacy as a serious problem.

V. Public Service

Though college students remain most interested in working for the private sector (63% are very or fairly interested), government work shows increased appeal, up from 39% last year to 47% now. Interest in working for a nonprofit community organization or foundation also increased, from 40% last year to 45% now. In fact,

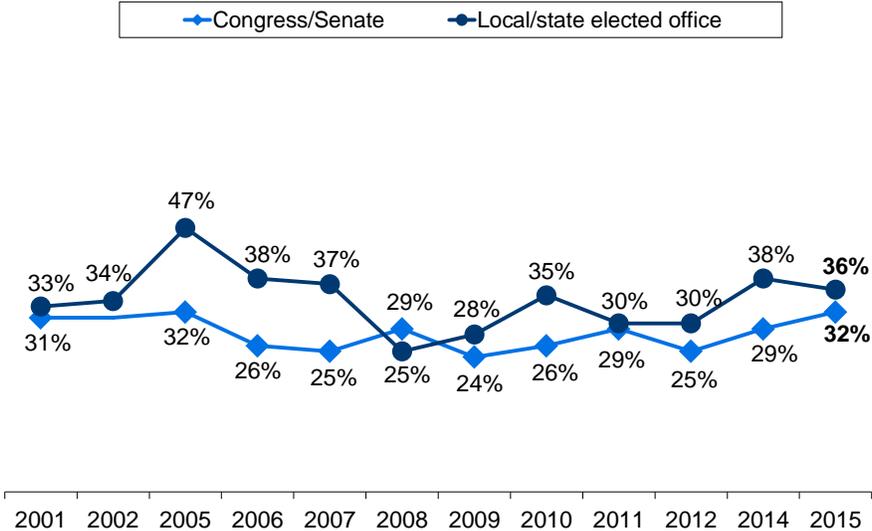
students are showing greater interest in all career areas that were tested in the survey. Government work is most appealing to those following the 2016 election very closely (70% interested), Hispanics (60%), students in the social sciences (57%) or humanities (53%), students who see our problems as mainly international in scope (54%), and Democrats (53%).

Students More Interested in Working for Government



Interest in running for Congress continues to increase in spite of the institution’s sustained poor approval ratings. Last year, 29% expressed interest in someday running for a federal elected office. Today, 32% of students say they would be interested, equal to the high-water mark of 32% in 2005. An even greater proportion (36%) would run for local or state elected positions, though this is a slight drop from 38% last year. Irrespective of the office, men express greater interest in running than do women, whose interest trails men’s by 17 points for federal offices and 14 points for state and local offices.

Interest in Running for Office



More than a third (37%) of students have considered pursuing service-oriented experiences such as Teach for America, VISTA, or AmeriCorps, a nine-point increase from last year and nearly equal with the all-time high point of 38% in 2012. Interest in national service increases by a wide margin when students are offered help paying for the cost of a college education: 63% would be interested in a program that provides grants or financial assistance to help pay for college in exchange for two years of national service. When asked in which area they would most likely serve, half choose teaching (50%). Another 34% choose an alternate form of national service and 16% say they would most likely want to serve in the military.